

**Teacher's Notes**  
***Lamplighter***  
**by Bernice Thurman Hunter**

"Lamplighter" is a beautifully written story about Canadian pioneer life. Bernice Thurman Hunter has based her book on stories told in her family about their early years on the family homestead near Huntsville, Ontario. Her use of vivid descriptive language and her ability to evoke the fears and joys of childhood make this a memorable book. The language is not easy, but the book has been used with gifted grade threes and could be utilized at any junior grade level. Bring pioneer objects into class for an effective introduction to the book, or use pictures and the book's cover for discussion.

***Reading Suggestions***

Any or all of these techniques could be used:

- Teacher could read all or part of the book to the children and have them do seatwork appropriate to their abilities.
- Group might read along with teacher.
- Group could read aloud together, with good readers helping others when needed.
- Children read chapters silently and do seatwork. The group discusses seatwork, with students reading appropriate sections of the chapter to "show proof" or just for the sheer enjoyment of the language.
- Some chapters may be taped by good readers so others can "read along" with a tape.

***Follow-up Suggestions:***

Avoid "doing the novel to death". Aim to have the story remembered as a colourful chronicle of pioneer life, not a mass of repetitious work. Give individuals and groups some choice in their activities.

1. Diary—Students could write an entry in a diary or journal expressing Willie's thoughts and feelings about the events in a given chapter. (This is an excellent test for comprehension.)
2. Drama—Only one drama activity has been included (Chapter 5) but it could be used as a model for any chapter. You might also suggest a "Freeze Frame" or "Tableau" as a follow-up.

"Freeze Frame" A group chooses part of a chapter and silently acts it out. Suddenly they freeze and remain immobile. The audience tells what part of the chapter they have been dramatizing.

"Tableau" The group discusses a chapter and chooses the part they think is most interesting. They then take and hold positions that effectively communicate the incident they have chosen. The audience tries to pinpoint the moment they are portraying.



**Chapter 11 — Sad Tidings**

A. Little Joe woke Willie's family in the middle of the night. Brainstorm and make a list of at least 10 things that might wake you in the middle of the night.

When everyone has completed the chart above, survey the responses of your class. Record:

1. the most common response \_\_\_\_\_

2. the most unusual response \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapter 15 — Digging Out Time**

Write a newspaper report about the Great Storm of 1889 that might appear on the front page of a local newspaper.

Give your newspaper a title

**ELDERBERRY TIMES**

January 15, 1889 Reporter \_\_\_\_\_

Story: Include a description of the results of the storm, the duration of the storm, a quote from Henry Adams, and any other details you think would be interesting to your readers.

Illustrate your story.

**Chapter 17 — Two Pennies**

A. Answer in complete sentences.

1. What thoughts did Willie have about his Grandma that comforted him and made him feel better?

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2. Why did the children do chores rather than eat Mrs. Hickling's turnip loaf? (Do not begin your answer with because.)

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B. On page 95, you will find all the foods that were served at old Grandma's funeral feast. List them in the two columns below.

Foods I Have Eaten

Foods I Have Not Eaten



**Chapter 19 — Courage!**

B. Draw a comic strip to show Willie's accident with Dobby, the medical care he received and his recovery.

**Comic Strip Tips**

Start with a big **TITLE**

and **Author's Name**

Print your words clearly. Don't try to say too much.

Draw the bubble after you put in the words

Frames can be narrow...

If time passes, or a lot happens, you can use a box like this to tell about it.

You don't always have to show who's speaking.

...and close-ups. They're great for expressions.

Don't forget sound effects!

**CRASH!**  
**WHAM!**

Use "long-shots"...

Tell the story in the order it happened. Add a bit of colour. Share your comic with a friend.